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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, SAN JOSE DIVISION

CHASOM BROWN, *et al.*,
Plaintiffs,
v.
GOOGLE LLC,
Defendant.

Case No. 5:20-cv-03664-LHK-SVK

**JOINT SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO
DKT. 331, 332 RE: SEALING PORTIONS
OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021 ORDER RE:
SPECIAL MASTER'S REPORT AND
ORDERS ON REFERRED DISCOVERY
ISSUES**

Referral: Hon. Susan van Keulen, USMJ

1 November 19, 2021

2 Submitted via ECF

3 Magistrate Judge Susan van Keulen
4 San Jose Courthouse
5 Courtroom 6 - 4th Floor
6 280 South 1st Street
7 San Jose, CA 95113

8 Re: Joint Submission in Response to Dkt. 331, 332 re: Sealing Portions of November
9 12, 2021 Order Adopting in Part and Modifying in Part the Special Master's Report
10 and Orders on Referred Discovery Issues
11 *Brown v. Google LLC*, Case No. 5:20-cv-03664-LHK-SVK (N.D. Cal.)

12 Dear Magistrate Judge van Keulen:

13 Pursuant to Your Honor's November 12, 2021 Redaction Order re: sealing portions of the
14 November 12, 2021 Order Adopting in Part and Modifying in Part the Special Master's Report and
15 Orders on Referred Discovery Issues, Plaintiffs and Google LLC ("Google") jointly submit this
16 statement.
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Google respectfully seeks to seal the following portions of the November 12, 2021 Order Adopting in Part and Modifying in Part the Special Master’s Report and Orders on Referred Discovery Issues (“Order”), which contain Google’s confidential and proprietary information regarding highly sensitive features of Google’s internal identifiers, systems, and operations that Google does not share publicly, including particular internal data sources Google was ordered to search for data relating to Plaintiffs. This information is highly confidential and should be protected.

This Administrative Motion pertains to the following information contained in the Order:

Document	Portions to be Filed Under Seal	Party Claiming Confidentiality
November 12, 2021 Order	Portions highlighted in yellow at: 4:9; 4:13; 4:15	Google
Exhibit 1 (Brown) to November 12, 2021 Order	Portions highlighted in yellow at: Paragraphs 3.1-3.7	Google

The parties conferred on the proposed redactions to the Order. Plaintiffs take no position and do not oppose sealing the proposed redactions.

I. LEGAL STANDARD

The common law right of public access to judicial records in a civil case is not a constitutional right and it is “not absolute.” *Nixon v. Warner Communications, Inc.*, 435 U.S. 589, 598 (1978) (noting that the “right to inspect and copy judicial records is not absolute” and that “courts have refused to permit their files to serve as reservoirs of . . . sources of business information that might harm a litigant’s competitive standing”). Sealing is appropriate when the information at issue constitutes “competitively sensitive information,” such as “confidential research, development, or commercial information.” *France Telecom S.A. v. Marvell Semiconductor Inc.*, 2014 WL 4965995, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 3, 2014); *see also Phillips v. Gen. Motors Corp.*, 307 F.3d 1206, 1211 (9th Cir. 2002) (acknowledging courts’ “broad latitude” to “prevent disclosure of materials for many types of information, including, but not limited to, trade secrets or other confidential research, development, or commercial information”).

II. THE ABOVE IDENTIFIED MATERIALS EASILY MEET THE “GOOD CAUSE” STANDARD AND SHOULD ALL BE SEALED

Courts have repeatedly found it appropriate to seal documents that contain “business information that might harm a litigant’s competitive standing.” *Nixon*, 435 U.S. at 589-99. Good cause to seal is shown when a party seeks to seal materials that “contain[] confidential information about the operation of [the party’s] products and that public disclosure could harm [the party] by disclosing confidential technical information.” *Digital Reg. of Texas, LLC v. Adobe Sys., Inc.*, 2014 WL 6986068, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 10, 2014). Materials that could harm a litigant’s competitive standing may be sealed even under the “compelling reasons” standard. *See e.g., Icon-IP Pty Ltd. v. Specialized Bicycle Components, Inc.*, 2015 WL 984121, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 4, 2015) (information “is appropriately sealable under the ‘compelling reasons’ standard where that information could be used to the company’s competitive disadvantage”) (citation omitted).

Here, the Order comprises confidential information regarding highly sensitive features of Google’s internal systems and operations that Google does not share publicly. Specifically, this information provides details related to various types of Google’s internal identifiers, projects, and data structures related to its products and services. Such information reveals Google’s internal strategies, system designs, and business practices for operating and maintaining many of its important services while complying with legal and privacy obligations.

Public disclosure of the above-listed information would harm Google’s competitive standing it has earned through years of innovation and careful deliberation, by revealing sensitive aspects of Google’s proprietary systems, strategies, designs, and practices to Google’s competitors. That alone is a proper basis to seal such information. *See, e.g., Free Range Content, Inc. v. Google Inc.*, No. 14-cv-02329-BLF, Dkt. No. 192, at 3-9 (N.D. Cal. May 3, 2017) (granting Google’s motion to seal certain sensitive business information related to Google’s processes and policies to ensure the integrity and security of a different advertising system); *Huawei Techs., Co. v. Samsung Elecs. Co.*, No. 3:16-cv-02787-WHO, Dkt. No. 446, at 19 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 30, 2019) (sealing confidential sales data because “disclosure would harm their competitive standing by giving competitors insight they do not have”); *Trotsky v. Travelers Indem. Co.*, 2013 WL 12116153, at *8 (W.D. Wash. May 8, 2013) (granting

1 motion to seal as to “internal research results that disclose statistical coding that is not publically
2 available”).

3 Moreover, if publicly disclosed, malicious actors may use such information to seek to
4 compromise Google’s internal systems and data structures. Google would be placed at an increased
5 risk of cyber security threats, and data related to its users could similarly be at risk. *See, e.g., In re*
6 *Google Inc. Gmail Litig.*, 2013 WL 5366963, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 25, 2013) (sealing “material
7 concern[ing] how users’ interactions with the Gmail system affects how messages are transmitted”
8 because if made public, it “could lead to a breach in the security of the Gmail system”). The security
9 threat is an additional reason for this Court to seal the identified information. The information Google
10 seeks to redact, including internal identifiers, projects, and data structures, is the minimal amount of
11 information needed to protect its internal systems and operations from being exposed to not only its
12 competitors but also to nefarious actors who may improperly seek access to and disrupt these systems
13 and operations. The “good cause” rather than the “compelling reasons” standard should apply but
14 under either standard, Google’s sealing request is warranted.

15 **III. CONCLUSION**

16 For the foregoing reasons, Google respectfully requests that the Court seal the identified
17 portions of the Order.

18
19 Respectfully,

20 QUINN EMANUEL URQUHART &
21 SULLIVAN, LLP

BOIES SCHILLER FLEXNER LLP

22 /s/ Andrew H. Schapiro

/s/ Mark C. Mao

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ATTESTATION OF CONCURRENCE

I am the ECF user whose ID and password are being used to file this Joint Submission.
Pursuant to Civil L.R. 5-1(i)(3), I hereby attest that each of the signatories identified above has
concurred in the filing of this document.

Dated: November 19, 2021

By /s/ Andrew H. Schapiro
Andrew H. Schapiro
Counsel on behalf of Google LLC